

Many Questions Unanswered

Despite All, Garrison Believes

By Richard N. Billings

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Jim Garrison, an expert at vilification warfare, has opened an offensive on the Federal Government.

Who else has charged that the Central Intelligence Agency was involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy?

Who has alleged the Warren Commission was packed with CIA-oriented men whose function it was to "conceal the assassination of the President by an ambush of CIA employees?"

Who has insisted the FBI had advance notice of the assassination?

Who has accused the Attorney General of "doing his best to

the Attorney General of the United States, "a political appointee who, if his father Tom Clark had not been on the Supreme Court, would probably be cleaning the street with a broom."

Justification

The justification for this can't be shared by many thinking people, although Mr. Garrison's following is suprisingly large. But it must be said that Mr. Garrison believes a good deal of the indictment. He is obsessed with the idea that officials in Washington are covering up facts about the assassination, and that the CIA and FBI are working to frustrate his case.

Careful scrutiny must be applied to a crucial question: Is there any substance to Mr. Garrison's charge of Washington subterfuge?

In the early days of his investigation, Mr. Garrison was persuaded that Lee Harvey Oswald

had been a Government agent. He contended that Oswald was taught Russian while in the Marine Corps and sent to the Soviet Union on an intelligence mission.

Oswald Loan

Oswald, Mr. Garrison argued, had defected with secret information about United States radio systems, yet when he supposedly tired of life under communism, he was allowed to return with his Russian wife.

The \$435.71 loan Oswald got from the State Department intrigued Mr. Garrison for another reason: the manner of repayment. Oswald started paying it off in August, 1962, in monthly installments of 10 dollars, an amount in line with his 60-dollar-a-week salary. Then in December he mailed in two money orders totaling 190 dollars. Then in January, 1963, he paid one hundred dollars, and later that month he erased the debt with a payment of 106 dollars.

Even Mr. Garrison would admit nothing conclusive can be

drawn from Oswald's impulse to square a debt, but it perhaps suggests an unknown benefactor wanted Oswald to be financially independent of the Government before moving to New Orleans in April.

Informant 'Lie'

Well before Mr. Garrison had read the Warren report, there was speculation that Oswald had worked for the Government. "Oswald Rumored as Informant for the U. S.," he had lined the Houston Post on January 1, 1964, over a story by Lonnie Hudkins. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover told the Warren Commission his agents had questioned Mr. Hudkins. "I was trying to nail down where this lie started," Mr. Hoover testified.

Mr. Hoover must have known the "lie" originated in the Dallas prosecutor's office. A January 3 Secret Service report detailed it for him.

It stated on December 17 Mr. Hudkins advised he had heard from the chief of the criminal division in the Dallas Sheriff's office that Oswald "was being paid two hundred dollars a month by the FBI as an informant in connection with subversive investigations."

FBI File

It is an undisputable fact the FBI had kept tabs on Oswald since his defection to Russia. The file on him contains 69 items. The last, dated November 19, 1963, states that on November 18 Oswald was in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.

There were several attempts by the bureau to locate Oswald preceding the assassination.

The commission was curious about the before-the-fact information the FBI had compiled on Oswald. On March 26, 1964, it submitted a memorandum to the bureau which posed some pointed questions, such as: "Were any further efforts made between November 5 and November 22 to locate Oswald, and if not, why not?"

The FBI replied no further efforts were made "... since

Analysis

torpedo the case of the State of Louisiana?"

Who has implied that Washington has obscured the truth of Mr. Kennedy's murder, so that Lyndon Johnson's "promotion to the Presidency will appear to be more legitimate?"

Alternatives

To understand why Mr. Garrison has carried his attack to the Federal Government, it is necessary to examine three alternatives:

—It is an example of his sledgehammer method.

—He honestly believes in a national conspiracy.

—The United States Government actually has something to hide.

There is probably an element of truth in each of the answers. The first two are partly explained by an examination of Mr. Garrison.

Lack of restraint when angered, a penchant for blockbuster phraseology and vindictive vituperation are essential qualities of the man. In Louisiana a list of Mr. Garrison's verbal assault victims reads like a directory of officialdom.

Outrageous as it may seem it is not surprising that Washington would get the same treatment. It is in character for Mr. Garrison to call Ramsey Clark,

his employment in a nonsensitive capacity had been established . . ."

Harvey Lee

Mr. Garrison has a witness who will swear that as a CIA courier in 1962 he turned over 50 thousand dollars to a "Harvey Lee" in a hotel in Monterrey, Mex. Harvey Lee, the witness will testify, was Oswald, and the money was earmarked for an anti-Castro group.

In a State Department report to the commission there is a secret attachment. It reads: "A telegram dated October 10, 1963, (was) sent by the Central Intelligence Agency to the Department of State informing the department that Lee Harvey Oswald on October 1, 1963, had contacted the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City."

A question arises: was Oswald photographed at either the Cuban or Russian Embassies?

The question is pertinent, because in Warren Commission evidence a mysterious picture appears. It shows a man, never publicly identified, and it is labeled, "Odum Exhibit No. 1." Affidavits to the commission by CIA Director Richard M. Helms and two Federal agents confirm that it is an intelligence photograph forwarded to the FBI a day after the assassination. A report in the National Archives that has recently been de-classified tells that it was taken in Mexico City.

Who? Why?

So, who is the man? Why was he photographed by the CIA?

Suggestions of CIA connections have been directed at the man Mr. Garrison has charged with conspiracy, Clay Shaw. One week after he was arrested, an Italian newspaper alleged that Mr. Shaw was on the CIA pay roll when, in 1958, he was working in Rome with the World Trade Center. The report has not been confirmed.